



To: David F. Hogan (Deputy Director state dep.); Mark Helvey in NMFS/SWR

From: John Harder (john-boy), owner/ Captain of f/v "OCEAN JOY"; stakeholder

In regards to: US-CAN Albacore Treaty:

Dear Mr. Hogan & Mr. Helvey,

As 1st to properly introduce myself, I would like to give you some of my background. I have over 30 years of experience fishing Albacore Tuna – starting with my Grandpa Bill Harder "Sun Ra II", 73'; Uncle Craig Harder "Hispaniola", 79'; owner of "Hey Mama", 81'; "Warlord", 88'; "Miss Angie", 91'; "Ocean Joy", 2010. I started out of Monterey Bay, CA & fished my way around both North & South Pacific Ocean. I have migrated with Albacore Tuna, trolling inside and outside of our US-EEZ, along with Canada's- EEZ as well. I value my freedom to go where I please. I also honor, respect, cherish, and exercise that freedom when need be. I feel the need to also state that I have no other (alternate) fishery. My income comes entirely from Albacore Tuna fishing. I share a love & compassion for this fishery & do not want it to fail or falter any longer. I want dearly to see our Albacore Tuna fishery flourish & grow to its fullest potential. This includes sharing our SUSTAINABLE fishing methods internationally.

I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. Hogan, for requesting stakeholder's input. I feel stakeholders, or fishermen in this fishery, have been misrepresented by the influence of fish buyers, processors, & canneries. I am only sorry I have not voiced my opinion sooner to someone who can make a difference. This shows me you care. Maybe you are that someone.

As to the US-CAN Albacore Treaty, I request it to be cancelled. Please abolish this treaty for the simple fact that all countries have an EEZ. To have such a treaty in affect should be unconstitutional as it takes away from my/our sovereign rights to all the Albacore inside our US EEZ.

EEZ stands for exclusive economic zone. I understand that to mean only Americans can receive benefits from such zone as US-EEZ. Otherwise it should not exist, or be renamed to US-EZ. The fact that it is Exclusive, gives all US fishermen sovereign rights to the zone. The amount of income (benefits) that Canada receives from the US EEZ is breathtaking.

As an active fisherman fishing our coastal waters, I have heard the opinions of many stakeholders. I honestly feel that the majority (US being Democratic) stakeholders say to: ***End the US-CAN Treaty.***

On a more personal note, I remember the days when the US-CAN Albacore treaty was 1st put in place. There were around a dozen of US fishermen migrating north with a run of albacore that got seized by Canada. There was no EEZ in effect, nor was there a great Canadian interest in the Albacore Tuna stocks off of Canada, at that time. If it was not for the US-CAN Albacore treaty, many US fishermen would not have benefitted during these years the Albacore migrated north into Canada's EEZ. Most US

stakeholders exercising this treaty were primarily Albacore tuna vessels with alternate fisheries such as Salmon Trolling or Yellow fin poling, etc. Most Canadian stakeholders were primarily Salmon Trollers, Seiners, who used the Albacore fishery as an alternate or secondary fishery. Today, things have changed and the “table is turned” which has put a stress on the Albacore fishery, especially among both US & CAN stakeholders.

In my opinion, if a US-CAN Albacore treaty must exist, so should a US-Mexico Albacore treaty. In turn, the US state dep. should work diligently to create such treaty with Mexico. This would show that neighboring countries can share their EEZ’s natural resources equally & fairly without offending, or discriminating against each other. Such treaties should be made in a way that is **agreeable to both Countries’ fishermen (stakeholders)**.

Having said that, if the US-CAN Albacore treaty was to continue, I would propose that:

Up to 19 Canadian fishing vessels should be allowed to take Albacore tuna from inside US EEZ.

Up to 19 American fishing vessels should be allowed to take Albacore tuna from inside Canadian EEZ.

Since it is my sovereign right, as a US fisherman, which I am giving up to fellow Canadian fishermen, I would like the right to say who I let fish inside my US EEZ. Such permits should be given to Canadian fishermen that: Have Albacore Tuna as a primary fishery, have long standing in exercising such Albacore treaty, have good standing among fellow US Albacore fishermen showing good fishing ethics & codes of conduct. Such permits should not be bought or sold to the highest bidder, or traded, but given on a 1st come 1st served bases with a waiting list, if need be. I would like the right to refuse, or revoke such a permit with a majority vote by fellow US fishermen. Such permits would then belong to individuals and not fishing vessels.

Although this will lead towards favoritism, it will also bring forth more communication, involvement, & fellowship among stakeholders on both sides of the border in which is well needed & a good thing. I feel we must try to work together for the benefit to all.

In closing, I would like to add that eliminating, or “greatly reducing” the US-CAN Albacore treaty could be looked upon as a way we are reducing Albacore tuna fishing effort inside our US EEZ. As an answer to the WCPTC’s request. This should NOT be regarded as so, but rather the upholding of the “codes of conduct” & or fishing ethics instead. More focus should be on BANNING the “High Seas driftnets” & ending the corruption that it is associated with this IUU fishing. This would greatly expand our fishery for both US & CANADA’s benefit.

I thank you again, Mr. Hogan & Mr. Helvey, for considering my opinion. Please feel free to contact me if there’s anything else I can do or say in this regard. Again, I apologize for not communicating more. As most fishermen spend most of their time at sea, or working on their boats, we do not take enough time to stand up for our rights. We need better representation & more unity.

Regards, John Harder

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